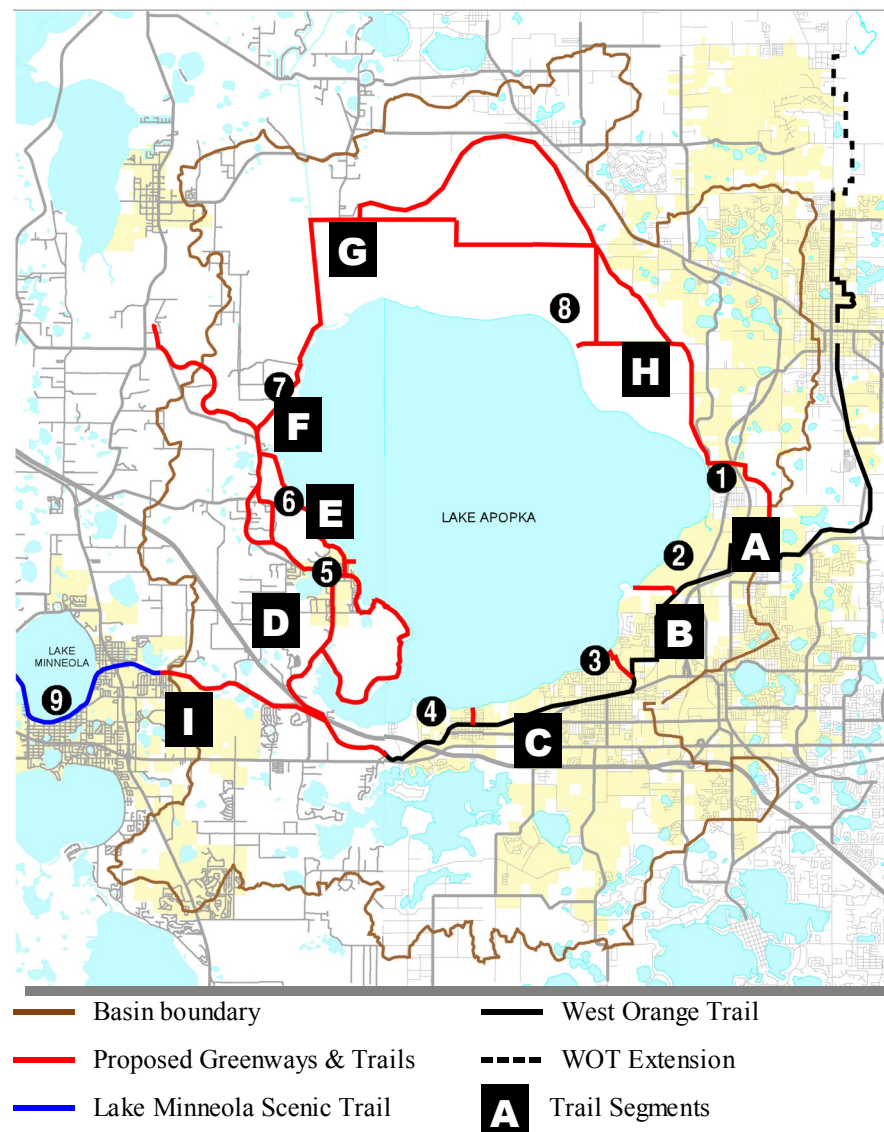




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Map 12: Greenways and Trails Master Plan



B. Greenways and Trails

“Greenways and trails make up a broad mix of natural and developed areas, each with unique characteristics. Greenways and trails are typically linear corridors on land or water with public access for recreation and transportation, or a preserve for natural habitat. Greenways and trails are more than land and water, they are a living legacy of what Florida was in the past, and we need to protect and nurture for the future.”

After the key recreation/eco-tourism sites were identified, LDI studied the potential to connect those sites with greenways and trails, as close to the lakeshore as possible. Greenways and trails provide many benefits, both to individuals and to the community as a whole. They include aesthetic beauty, recreation, physical health and fitness, community pride, flood control, education and appreciation, scientific research and preservation.

The greenway/trail segments identified by LDI include:

- Segment A - Magnolia Park to Ocoee Property
- Segment B - Ocoee to Winter Garden
- Segment C - Winter Garden to Oakland Nature Preserve
- Segment D - Oakland Nature Preserve to Montverde
- Segment E - Montverde to Lake County Lake-

front Preserve

Segment F - Lake County Lakefront Preserve to Aquatic Park

Segment G - Aquatic Park to Bird Sanctuary/Nature Center

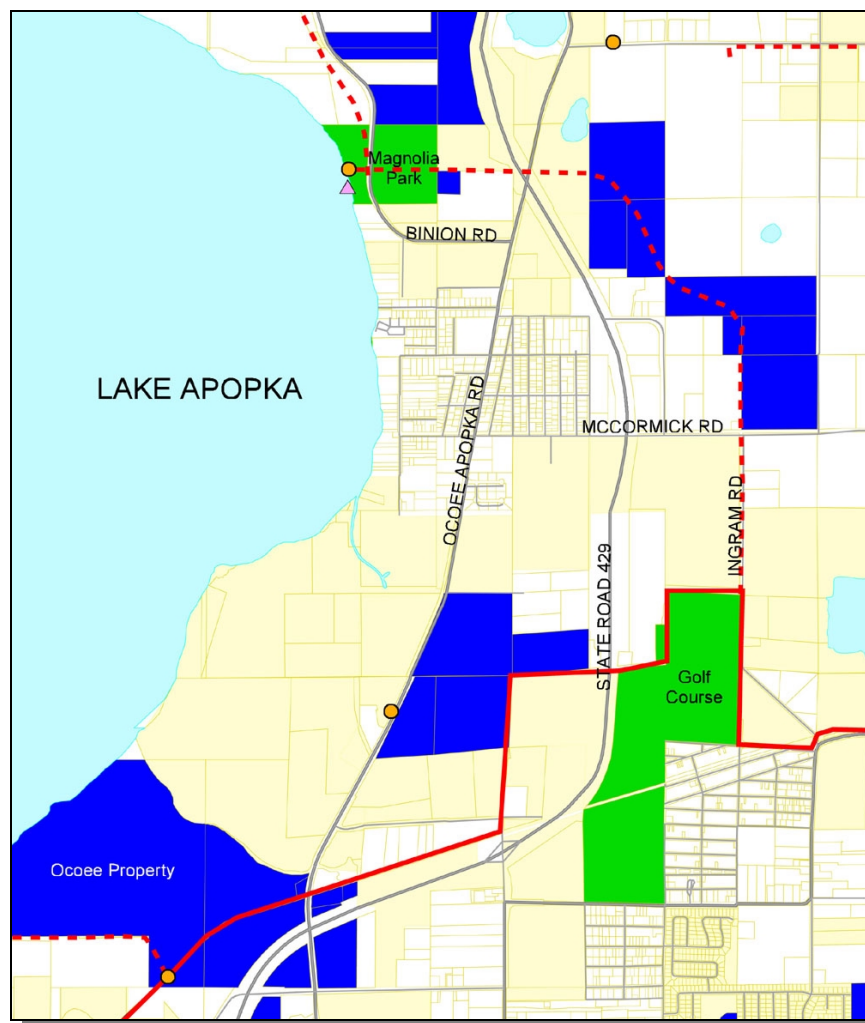
Segment H - Bird Sanctuary/Nature Center to Magnolia Park

Segment I - Lake Apopka Loop to Lake Minneola Urban Waterfront Park



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Map 13: Segment A - Magnolia to Ocoee



See Map Legend on Page iii

Segment A - Magnolia Park to Ocoee Property

This segment would connect Magnolia Park with the Ocoee property. Alternatives considered in past studies included using the existing right-of-way of Binion Road and McCormick Road. LDI proposes establishing the connection through properties currently owned by Orange County, north of the intersection of Ingram and McCormick roads (see Map 13).

The following improvements would need to take place to connect Magnolia Park and the Ocoee Trailhead:

- The west and east portions of Magnolia Park need to be connected with pavers, crosswalks, and signage to take pedestrians and bikers safely across Binion Road.
- Study the potential for connecting the east portion of Magnolia Park to the West Orange Trail through properties currently owned by Orange County, and along Ingram Road. Very few private property owners would need to be involved in establishing this connection.
- Once on the West Orange Trail, visitors would have direct access to the Ocoee property.
- It is highly recommended that FOLA approach the City of Ocoee to have the City formally make a

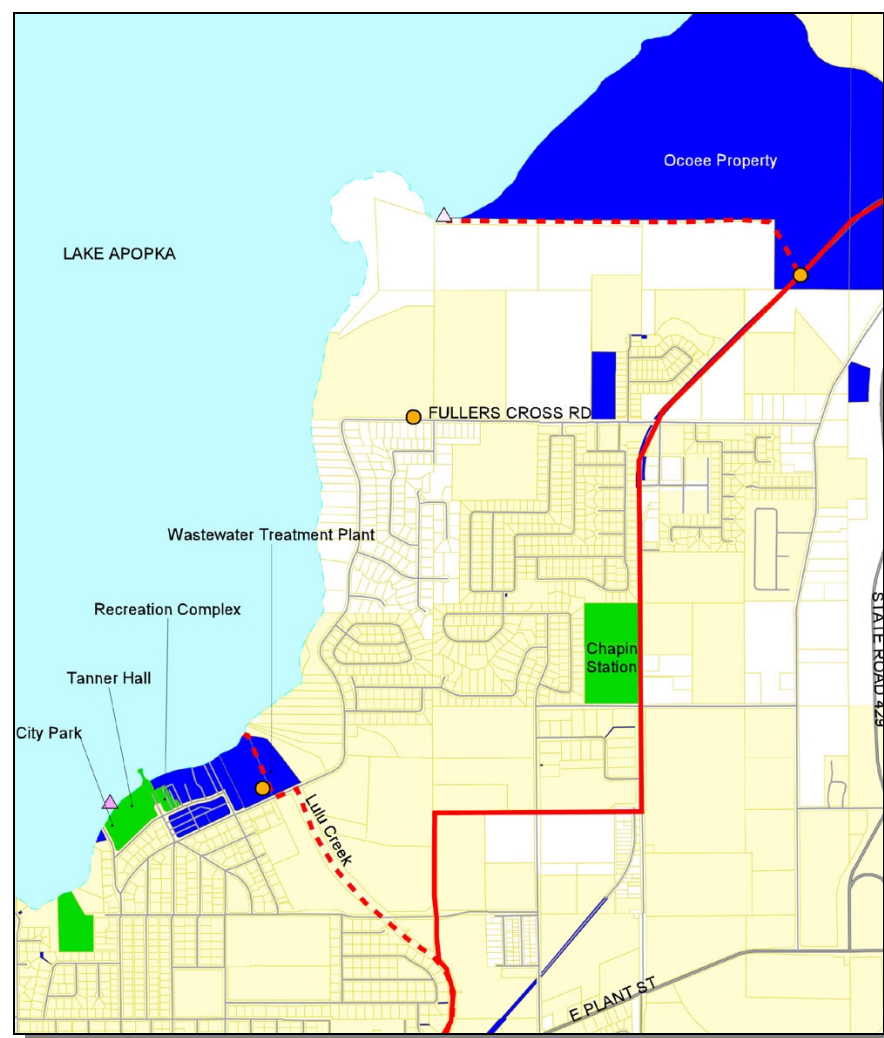
commitment to provide a trail spur from the West Orange Trail to the lakeshore and to any recreation areas to be provided within the Ocoee property (City park, butterfly garden, etc.).



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Map 14: Segment B - Ocoee to Winter Garden



See Map Legend on Page iii

Segment B - Ocoee to Winter Garden

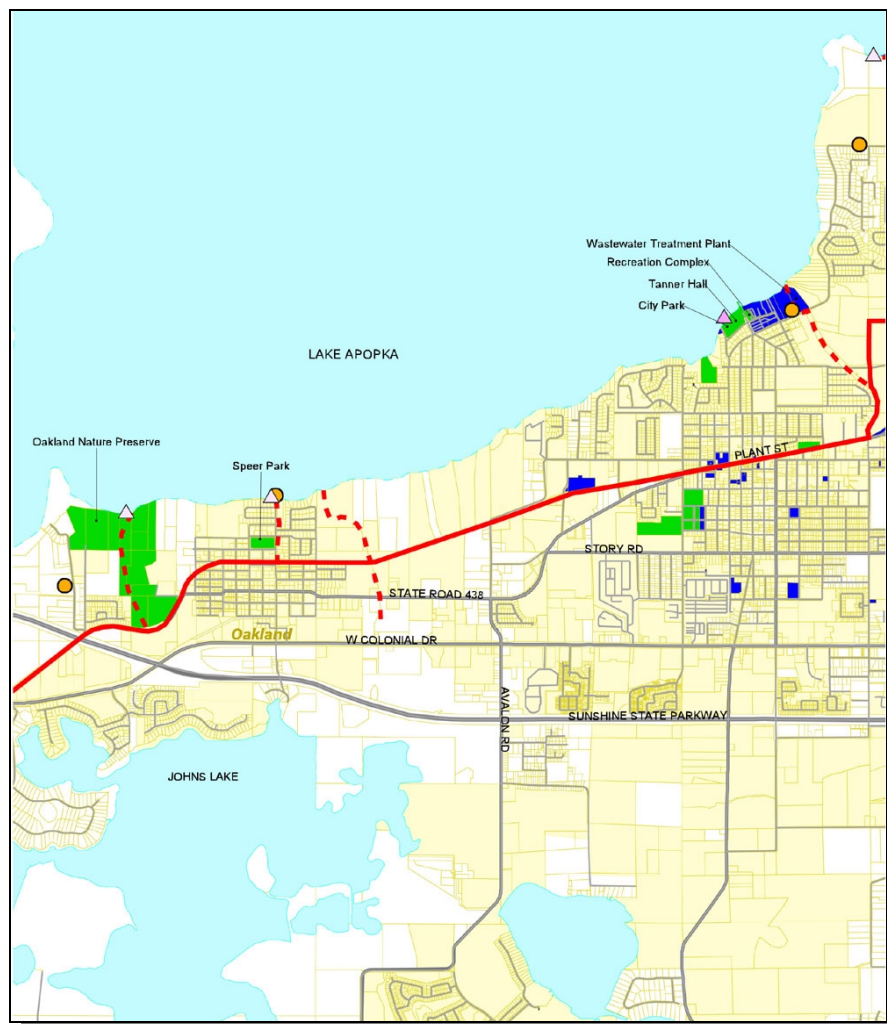
There is currently a trail connecting the Ocoee property with the Winter Garden downtown area. From that point, the following improvements will be necessary:

- Improve the area along Lulu Creek into a Stormwater/Linear Park.
- Provide a connection from north end of Lulu Creek to the Recreation complex, either through the mobile home property, which is owned by the City, as close to the lakeshore as possible, or along Crest Avenue.



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Map 15: Segment C - Winter Garden to Oakland



See Map Legend on Page iii

Segment C - Winter Garden to Oakland Nature Preserve

The West Orange Trail already facilitates this connection. Additional improvements to consider:

- Install signs directing trail users to points of interest in the area, such as Bed & Breakfast Inns, restaurants, parks, museums, and lake access.
- Establish a spur along Tubbs Street, passing through Speer Park, to connect the WOT with the lake.
- Build an observation platform at the north end of Tubbs Street in Oakland.



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Map 16: Segment D - Oakland to Montverde



See Map Legend on Page iii

Segment D - Oakland Nature Preserve to Downtown Montverde

The Oakland Nature Preserve is adjacent to the West Orange Trail. This trail runs west to the County line. From that point, there are several alternatives to be considered. Lake County has been working on several alternative alignments for the proposed South Lake Trail. Also, the developer of Pine Island has expressed his intent to provide a public trail along the lake for the length of the property. The alternatives being considered to connect Oakland to Montverde include:

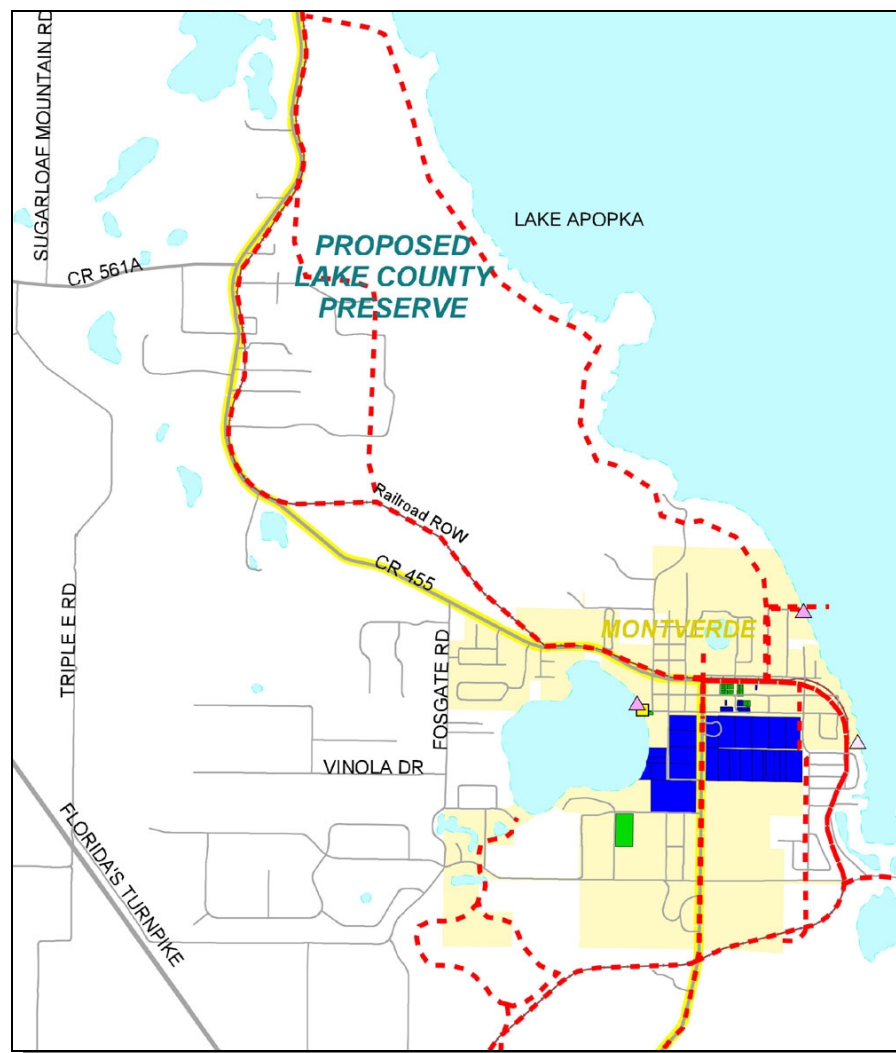
1. **South Lake Trail to West:** The preferred alignment for the South Lake Trail runs along railroad right-of-way, portions of which have been vacated and are currently under private ownership. Some portions of the right-of-way have already been acquired, while other pieces are still under negotiations. Once the County completes the process, this trail will connect the west end of the West Orange Trail with the Lake Minneola Scenic Trail in Clermont, and eventually to the General Van Fleet Trail. Lake County has two other alternative alignments to consider in case the first one does not work. They are shown on Maps 15 and 20.

2. **South Lake Trail to North:** From the South Lake Trail, there will need to be a trail heading north toward Montverde. LDI proposes using the Seaboard Railroad right-of-way and some private property acquisition to reach the south end of the proposed Pine Island Trail.
3. **Pine Island Trail:** The commitment to develop the Pine Island trail (shown on Map 15) needs to be formalized by the County and the developer, to ensure that this trail will remain open to the general public, and to determine ownership and maintenance responsibilities.
4. **Montverde Trail:** The last stretch needed on this segment would run from Pine Island to Montverde, where there is potential for taking the trail through the Montverde Academy campus, along what used to be railroad right-of-way, and some private properties to be acquired in the future. Map 15 shows alternative routes to be considered.



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Map 17: Segment E - Oakland to Lake County Preserve



See Map Legend on Page iii

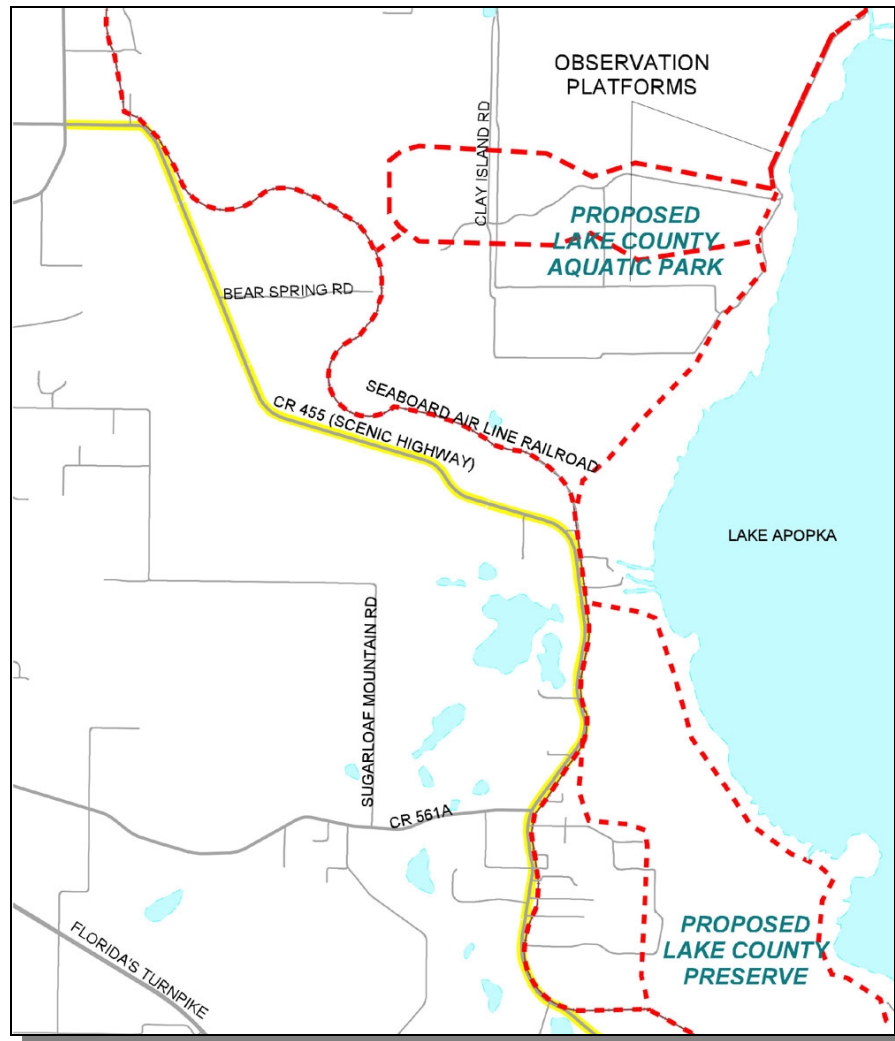
Segment E - Downtown Montverde to Lake County Lakefront Preserve

There are two proposed alternatives for connecting the Town of Montverde and the proposed Lake County Preserve. One alternative consists of a trail running along the lake. Should it be necessary due to the presence of wetlands in the area, the trail could be in the form of an elevated boardwalk. The second alternative would be a trail running parallel to CR 455 (proposed Scenic Highway), along the former Tavares & Gulf railroad (Seaboard Coast Line) right-of-way. Portions of the right-of-way are currently under private ownership. Therefore, land acquisition would be necessary to complete this segment.



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Map 18: Segment F - Lake County Lakefront Preserve to Lake County Aquatic Park

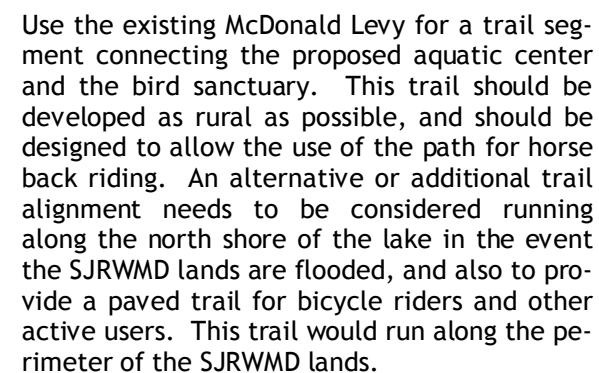


Segment F - Lake County Lakefront Preserve to Lake County Aquatic Park

This trail segment should be located as close to the lake as possible. All of the lands in the area are, however, in private ownership. A second alternative for this trail segment would be to develop a trail along the Seaboard Air Line Railroad (Tavares & Gulf Railroad). In this case, the trail would run closer to the Scenic Highway and in some areas it would be adjacent to the road right-of-way.

See Map Legend on Page iii

Segment G - Lake County Aquatic Park to Bird Sanctuary



See Map Legend on Page iii



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Map 20: Segment H - Bird Sanctuary to Magnolia Park



Segment H - Bird Sanctuary to Magnolia Park

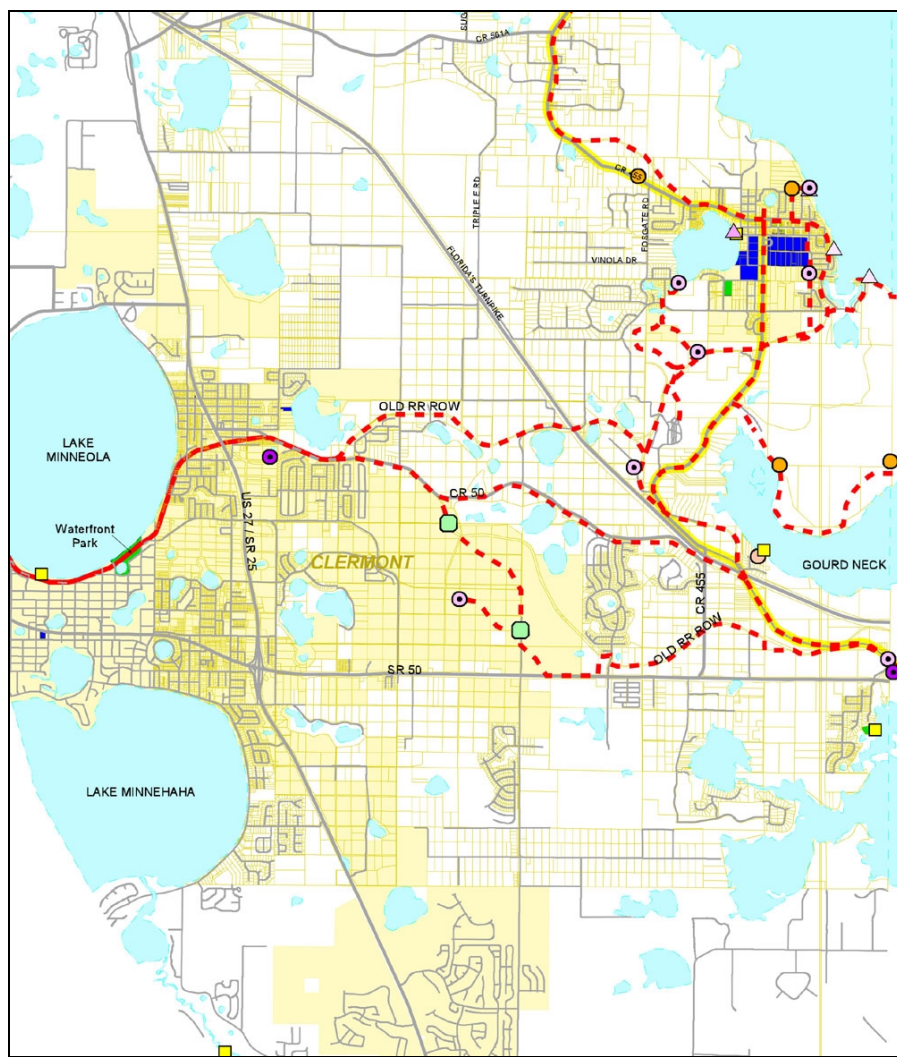
These two properties could be connected through the McDonald levy to a certain point, and then through a trail to be developed along the perimeter of the Restoration Area. The City of Apopka has adopted a master plan for this area showing a boardwalk along the lake-shore. The City and County would need to work together to implement the provision of that boardwalk. This part of the loop would need to include not just one, but a series of interconnected trails to be able to experience the bird watching activity to the fullest. Most of these trails should be restricted to pedestrian use and horseback riding only.

See Map Legend on Page iii



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Map 21: Segment I - Lake Apopka Loop to Clermont



Segment I - Lake Apopka Loop to Clermont

When the Lake Apopka Loop is connected to the Lake Minneola Scenic Trail (21 miles when complete), it will have access to the Gen. James A. Van Fleet Trail (29 miles), increasing the accessibility to the Lake Apopka area. The Van Fleet trail begins in Polk City west of the State Road 33 overpass and runs to State Road 50 in Sumter County.

As discussed in previous sections, Lake County currently is working on land acquisition to connect the West Orange Trail to the Lake Minneola Scenic Trail. Map 20 shows the alternative alignments being considered by the County.

See Map Legend on Page iii



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IMPLEMENTATION

This master plan provides the conceptual framework for the development of the greenways and trails around Lake Apopka. This document needs to be presented to the elected officials of the various municipalities involved for approval in the form of a resolution. The resolution should also state that the specific municipality will work with the other municipalities and agencies, and FOLA to implement the conceptual trail master plan.

A. Design

Once this master plan has been endorsed by all the jurisdictions and agencies involved, the second step in the process, the design phase, can begin. During the design phase, each one of the nine eco-tourism sites and trail segments will need to be designed/redesigned to show the proposed improvements that would attract visitors to the lake. In some instances, the improvements may be minor as is the case with the West Orange Trail segments already in place, and in other cases they may involve major improvements ranging from acquisition to development, as is the case of the proposed Lake County Lakefront Preserve.

Each trail segment will need to be designed in accordance with the setting, which could vary

from a paved trail in more urban areas, to an elevated boardwalk if the trail is crossing wetlands or environmentally sensitive areas.

In order to maintain a common theme throughout the loop, it is recommended that design guidelines be established upfront (signage and architecture, for example).

As part of the design phase, the proposed trail segments will need to be studied in more detail to determine feasibility of acquisition (see next section).

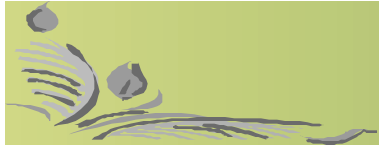
B. Acquisition

Prior to submitting an application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for funding of this project, it would be necessary to contact all the owners of lands to be acquired to obtain sale/purchase agreements. LDI has started preparing a document that contains an inventory of potential acquisition sites. The list shows the property owner name, property identification number, acreage, assessed value, and other information that will be of use at the time of site selection and acquisition. That work will be available as part of the design phase.

C. Ownership & Maintenance

As potential projects are identified and approved for implementation by the various jurisdictions involved, a decision will need to be made regarding who will be the owner of specific sites (County, City, or other agency), and who will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facilities. The following are some suggestions:

- **Magnolia Park** - Continue under County ownership and maintenance.
- **Segment A** - The County should be in charge of the acquisition, maintenance and operation of the new trail segment by making it part of the existing West Orange Trail system.
- **Ocoee Property** - The Butterfly Garden and the trail connecting the West Orange Trail and the Butterfly Garden (and the lake) should be owned by the City of Ocoee. There may be a public-private agreement for the operation and maintenance of the Garden. The City may also be the responsible agency for the maintenance of the trail and any boardwalks located within the mitigation area.
- **Segment B** - The WOT section will continue to be owned and maintained by the County. The section of the trail connecting the WOT with the Wastewater Treatment Plant along Lulu Creek should be owned by the City (City Park) and maintained by the City and the County, since it will be an extension of the WOT, through an interlocal agreement. The segment connecting the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the recreation complex to the west should be owned and maintained by the City.
- **Winter Garden** - The facilities within the Winter Garden Recreation Complex should continue to be owned and maintained by the City.
- **Segment C** - This segment follows the existing West Orange Trail. No change in ownership or maintenance is recommended. However, a trail stub should be considered to run along Tubbs Street, from the WOT to the lake, passing through Spears Park.
- **Oakland Nature Preserve** - No change in ownership or maintenance necessary.
- **Segment D** - As noted in the previous section, this segment consist of four sub-segments. The WOT portion would continue under Orange County ownership and



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maintenance; the construction and maintenance of the South Lake Trail should be Lake County's responsibility; the Pine Island Trail would be privately owned, with an easement dedicated to the County for public use; the Montverde trail could be owned and operated by the Town or the County, or through a joint venture between the two municipalities.

- **Downtown Montverde** - The South Lake County Chamber of Commerce could assist the Town to encourage the development of shops and small restaurants/cafes along CR 455 to cater to the trail users. There is no need for a formal designated trail-head in this area. The entire Town, including the downtown area, Montverde Academy, historic sites and local parks offer interesting recreational activities.
- **Segment E** - These trail/boardwalk should be the responsibility of Lake County or the agency responsible for the proposed preserve.
- **Lake County Nature Preserve** - This preserve could be owned and operated by the County, or the County could enter into an agreement with another public or private party interested in developing the recreation area, lodging, nature trails, etc.
- **Segment F** - This segment requires land acquisition. See the acquisition section for possible alignments. It is recommended that the County heads the efforts to acquire and develop the trail to con-

nect the proposed County preserve to the SJRWMD lands.

- **Aquatic Park** - The proposed aquatic park could be a joint venture between the SJRWMD and Lake County.
- **Segment G** - This trail segment is recommended to be as natural as possible. Ownership and maintenance may be the responsibility of the County or the SJRWMD, depending on how long the lands are kept under the SJRWMD ownership.
- **Bird Sanctuary/Nature Center** - This could also be a joint venture involving the Audubon Society, Orange County, and the SJRWMD.
- **Segment H** - This would be the last segment to close the Lake Apopka Loop. The first portion of it would be under SJRWMD ownership until such time as the district finishes the restoration project. The district may opt to keep portions of the area for recreational, conservation or educational purposes. If that were the case, the district would be the owner of the trail, but may have an agreement with Orange County for maintenance. The portion outside district lands is still under private ownership. The County and the City of Apopka should work together on acquiring the necessary right-of-way for the trail to connect to Magnolia Park.
- **Clermont/Lake Minneola Urban Waterfront Park** - This is an existing facility. No

additional improvements are proposed.

- **Segment I** - Lake County would be responsible for building and maintaining the South Lake Trail; Clermont would be responsible for the Lake Minneola Scenic Trail.

D. Grants & Funding

Figure 11 identifies a number of grants that are available to fund projects related to recreation, greenways & trails, transportation, conservation. The table shows when applications can be submitted, contact information, and other information that will be of use at the time of the implementation of the Lake Apopka Master Plan.

The main source of funding to be considered for the Lake Apopka project is the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Office of Greenways of Trails (OGT). This office is in charge of implementing the State Greenways and Trails master plan. The OGT office not only provides planning and technical assistance regarding the acquisition, establishment and management of greenways and trails projects, but also administers land acquisition and project development grants.

Some issues to consider when preparing any grant applications:

- When applying for a greenways & trails

grant, stress the fact that the proposed loop will connect to other existing trails, creating a larger system, covering several municipalities and counties.

- The proposed system will further the purpose of the State Greenways and Trails Plan.
- Have the municipalities apply at the same time for grants to fund specific projects or segments within their jurisdictions.



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Figure 11: Grant Sources

AGENCY	DUE	TYPE	AMOUNT	REQUIRED MATCH	CONTACT	NUMBER
Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants	8/1/01	Community Planning Initiatives for small/rural local govern-	\$10,000	no	Florida DCA	850-488-2356
FCT(Preservation 2000)	n/a	Environmental land acquisition for conservation and recreation	\$2.2 mil.	yes	Florida Community Trust (FCT) - DCA	850-922-2207
Florida Forever, Florida Communities Trust	8/13/01	Land Acquisition	1.5% of FL Forever	10%-60%	DCA	850-922-2207
Florida Recreation Development and Assistance Program (FRDAP)	10/12/01	Land Acquisition or Development	\$200,000 max.	50% for \$150,000+	Bureau of Design & Recreation Services, Linda Reeves	850-488-7896
Greenways & Trails Acquisition program	10/23/01	Land Acquisition	Varies	No min., but necessary	DEP, Office of Greenways & Trails	850-488-3701
Land and Water Conservation Fund	7/18/01	Land Acquisition or Development	\$150,000 (2001)	50/50	Florida D.E.P	850-488-7896
Pathways to Nature	12/1/01	Projects that enhance environmental education activities and bird and wildlife viewing opportunities at "significant" nature tourism destinations (100,000	\$50,000	None	Peter Stangle, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	404-679-7099
Recreation & Trails Program (RTP) (TEA-21)	1/31/02	Projects that provide or maintain rec. trails and facilities	\$100,000	varies (50:50; 60:40; 30:20 max.)	DEP	850-488-3701

Source: Land Design Innovations, Inc., October 2001.



Lake Apopka Greenways & Trails Master Plan

PROMOTION

A. Designation

Once the Lake Apopka trail starts to be developed, even if using existing portions of the West Orange Trail, the Friends of Lake Apopka in conjunction with all the municipalities and Counties involved, should apply to the FDEP - Office of Greenways and Trails for designation. The mission of the Florida Greenways and Trails System is to create a network of greenways and trails throughout Florida, connecting one end of the state to the other, from Key West to Pensacola. The *Office of Greenways & Trails Reference and Resource Guide* lists the following benefits of designation:

Designation brings public recognition to local and regional greenway and trail projects.

As resources allow, DEP may enter into management and patrol and protection agreements, and into leases if so stipulated in the designation agreement. DEP will also identify sources of funding for management and restoration needs.

Designation into the Florida Greenways and Trails System gives private landowners liability protection (see related question below).

Designation into the Florida Greenways and Trails System will give lands and waterways additional consideration in certain public land

acquisition and grant programs, such as the Florida Communities Trust Land Acquisition Program, the Recreational Trails Grant Program, and the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program.

B. Brochures

This Master Plan will need to be condensed into a brochure format to serve as a walking/bicycling/driving tour brochure, identifying the key sites that should be visited to learn more about Lake Apopka, its history, its future and to learn more about the surrounding communities.

C. Other Points of Interest

In addition to the main trailheads identified above, there are numerous sites around the lake that deserve recognition and should be pointed out in the Lake Apopka Greenways and Trails brochure. They include:

- Clarcona Horseman's Park
- Bed & Breakfast Inns
- Museums

- Oakland City Hall
- Pine Island Development
- Scenic Highway
- Seaboard Coast Line Railroad - Potential for a trail. Proposed Tavares and Gulf Trail, Lake County Rails to Trails.
- Local City/County Parks



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Figure 12: Inventory of Trailhead Properties

	Name	Location	Parcel Numbers	Size	Ownership	Current Use	Facilities Provided	Potential Use	Assessed	Proposed Improvements
1	Magnolia Park	2928 & 2929 S. Bin-ion Rd, Apopka	30-21-28-0152-00-030 east; 30-21-28-0000-00-007 west	35.12 east; 14.34 west;	Orange County	Park	Camping, active & pas-sive recreation. Boat	Same	N/A	Connect with Ocoee property/mitigation area. Consider
2	Ocoee property (Coke)	2012 Ocoee Apopka Rd	06-22-28-0000-00-005	270	City of Ocoee	Vacant	None	Mixed Use Park-Butterfly	NA	Connect with Magnolia Park to the north, and Lulu Creek
3	Lulu Creek	Winter Garden	NA	NA	City Of Winter Gar-	Vacant/Utility	None	Linear Park	NA	Use to connect WOT and
	Sewer Plant	101 E Crest Av	14-22-27-0000-00-039 & 031	7.08 (1), 5.03 (2)	City Of Winter Gar-den	Utility	Treatment Plant	Connect Lulu Creek & Recrea-	NA	Review potential to connect
	City Recreation Office	1 Surprise Dr	14-22-27-9392-20-390	NA	City Of Winter Gar-	Public Office	Offices, pool	Same	NA	Connect with Lulu Creek
	John Tanner Hall & Park	31 W Garden Av	14-22-27-9392-20-580	4.83	City Of Winter Gar-	Public Use	Meeting Hall	Same	NA	None
4	Oakland Preserve	SR 438, Oakland	20-22-27-0000-00-016	103.34	Town Of Oakland	Passive Recreation	Amphitheater, nature	Boardwalks, pavil-	NA	Implement master plan
5	Town of Montverde	Montverde	N/A	N/A	N/A	Downtown uses in-clude shops, parks, personal services.	N/A	Trailhead – com-mercial and rec-reational ameni-	N/A	Encourage the establishment of shops, restaurants, and cafes that offer services and
6	Lake County Lakefront	West shore of lake,	To be determined at a later date, during	200 acres recom-	Various	Vacant/wetlands	None public	Preserve/	TBD	Develop a preserve
7	Lake County Aquatic Park (proposed)	Between SR 455 and the lake, within SJRWMD property	To be determined at a later date, during the Design Phase	400 acres recom-mended	SJRWMD	Recreation/restoration	Trails, observation plat-forms	Aquatic Park	TBD	Canoe, boat launching, fish-ing.
8	Bird Sanctuary/Nature Center (Orange County)	North shore	To be determined at a later date, during the Design Phase	200 acres recom-mended	SJRWMD	Restoration	Elevated roads	Bird Sanctuary, nature center &	TBD	Bird Sanctuary signage, trails

TBD—To be determined at a later phase

Source: Land design Innovations, Inc., November 2001